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BASIC LEVEL ELECTIONS FALL BEHIND SCHEDULE IN CHINA

[Comment: Basic level popular elections have been completed in scattered areas of China according to press reports in the 1-20 October issues of the Peiping Jen-min Jih-pao, and the 1-30 October issues of the Tientsin Ta Kung Pao. However, the reports clearly indicated that local authorities are still concerned with the training of election cadres and the propagandizing of the masses on the meaning and mechanics of the election. These reports named areas where elections had been held and the proposed dates for other elections. Basic level elections were scheduled for completion by October.

This report gives information on elections held in the Northeast, in North China, and in Central-South China.

Numbers in parentheses refer to appended sources.]

Northeast China

Popular elections have been held in 7,626 villages, 95 towns, and 14 municipal districts; i.e., in 27 percent of the basic level units of the Northeast Administrative Area.

In Sungkiang Province, 72 percent of the villages held elections before the autumn harvest. In Jehol Province, 4,068 basic level units completed their census taking and the registration of voters, but will not hold elections until after the harvest. Meanwhile, municipalities in Jehol Province are carrying on experimental elections.

Generally speaking, a large majority of the present cadres are being "re-elected," for instance, so far elections held in the villages of Liaotung Province have "re-elected" 80 percent of the cadres.

Basic level elections were completed in Fu-shun during August and preparations are under way for the convening of a people's congress there.

Registration of voters started in An-shan during September and will not be completed until mid October. Meanwhile, more than 3,000 propagandists and 300 activists are holding street meetings, exhibits, and lantern slide shows, and lecturing to workers in factories, mines, and business establishments on the importance and operation of the census and the registration of voters.(1)

North China

The North China Administrative Committee held a conference of provincial and municipal representatives from 5 to 10 October to discuss the operations of the coming elections and to exchange reports on experiences during the experimental elections held in various sections of the area. Reports to the conference gave the following information:

Experimental elections were conducted in 352 hsiangs in 24 streets.

According to preliminary reports, more than 5,000 cadres took part in experimental elections that were held in Shansi and Hopeh provinces.

Basic level elections will be held in Shansi and Hopeh provinces and in Peiping by the end of October or in early November. The taking of the census

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and the registration of voters have been completed in Tientsin, and a list of candidates for the people's congresses is now being compiled for the election.

Chang Su, vice-chairman of the North China Administrative Committee, warned the conference that as basic level elections are held there will be more basic units participating in the election and fewer personnel to assist with the elections thus creating new problems.(2)

Central-South China

Preparatory work is under way for the holding of large-scale basic level elections in Central-South China during November.

Election committees were organized in all the provinces and cities during April, and by June experiments in election work were held in 1,000 hsiangs and towns. Preliminary statistics indicated that more than 7,000 cadres are being trained for election work in Hunan, Kwangsi, and Honan provinces and in Wuhan and Changsha. In Wuhan alone, 1,300 cadres will begin training for election work on 20 October.

The Miao Autonomous areas in Hunan Province have selected 311 cadres for training in election work. During September, 3,600 cadres from the 15 hsien of the T'ung autonomous areas in Kwangsi Province completed similar training.

Basic level elections were held during September in all the hsiangs of Ching-kang-shan, the 1927 headquarters of the Chinese Communist Party revolution. As a result of these elections, people's congresses were convened and people's governments organized, and hsiang magistrates and deputy magistrates were elected. Following these events, a telegram of felicitation was sent to Mao Tse-tung.(2)

SOURCES

1. Peiping, Jen-min Jih-pao, 14 Oct 53
2. Tientsin, Ta Kung Pao, 19 Oct 53

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